

Contact:

Patrick Kowalczyk, patrick@pkpr.com

Jenny Chang, jenny@pkpr.com

PKPR, 212.627.8098

DAYTON LITERARY PEACE PRIZE TO HONOR N. SCOTT MOMADAY WITH

AMBASSADOR RICHARD C. HOLBROOKE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Acclaimed writer of fiction, poetry, and memoir who led Native American literature into the mainstream will be honored in Dayton on November 3rd, 2019

Dayton, OH (July 22, 2019) – Writer N. Scott Momaday, who for more than half a century has illuminated both the ancient and contemporary lives of Native Americans through fiction, essays, and poetry, will receive the 2019 [Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award](#), organizers of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize announced today.

Named in honor of the celebrated U.S. diplomat who played an instrumental role in negotiating the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the war in Bosnia, the award will be presented to Momaday at the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Gala on November 3rd, 2019. Founded in 2006, The Dayton Literary Peace Prize is the only international literary peace prize awarded in the United States. It honors writers whose work use the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding. The Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award recognizes authors for their complete body of work.

A Kiowa Indian, Navarre Scott Momaday was born in 1934 and grew up on Southwestern Navajo, Apache, and Pueblo reservations, where his parents were teachers. His first novel, *House Made of Dawn* (1968), which tells the story of a young man returning to his Kiowa pueblo after a stint in the U.S. Army, won the 1969 Pulitzer Prize for fiction and has been widely credited with spearheading the breakthrough of Native American literature into the mainstream. Momaday helped ensure the preservation of Kiowa history and folk tales by offering his own lyrical interpretations in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969), and shared how respect for his ancestors shaped his early life in *The Names: A Memoir* (1976). His reverence for the natural world as a sacred space is reflected in his many stories, essays, and poems, which have been published in such acclaimed collections as *Angle of Geese and Other Poems* (1974), *The Man Made of Words: Essays, Stories, Passages* (1997) and *The Death of Sitting Bear: New and Selected Poems* (due in 2020). Momaday was awarded the National Medal of Arts in 2007.

“N. Scott Momaday’s body of work illustrates the power of ritual, imagination, and storytelling to mediate between cultures, produce peace through intercultural understanding, and heal individuals damaged by conflict,” said Sharon Rab, the founder and chair of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Foundation. “By honoring and safeguarding the storytelling traditions of our nation’s indigenous communities, his writings at the same time affirm the value of a multicultural society.”

On winning the Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award, Momaday said: "If we are to understand the synthesis of literature and peace, we must first consider that the end of art is the definition of the human condition. In its ultimate realization the human condition is a state of peace. Peace is the objective of human evolution, and literature is the measure of that evolution. The history of human experience is in many ways a history of dysfunction and conflict, and literature, because it is an accurate record of that history, reflects not only what is peaceful but what is the universal hope and struggle for peace. Literature and peace are at last indivisible. They form an equation that is the definition of art and humanity."

Momaday will join the ranks of past winners of the Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award, formerly called the Lifetime Achievement Award, including Studs Terkel (2006), Elie Wiesel (2007), Taylor Branch (2008), Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn (2009), Geraldine Brooks (2010), Barbara Kingsolver (2011), Tim O'Brien (2012), Wendell Berry (2013), Louise Erdrich (2014), Gloria Steinem (2015), Marilynne Robinson (2016), Colm Tóibín (2017), and John Irving (2018).

Finalists for the 2019 Dayton Literary Peace Prize will be announced on August 13th, 2019.

About the Dayton Literary Peace Prize

The Dayton Literary Peace Prize honors writers whose work uses the power of literature to foster peace, social justice, and global understanding. Launched in 2006, it is recognized as one of the world's most prestigious literary honors, and is the only literary peace prize awarded in the United States. As an offshoot of the Dayton Peace Prize, the Dayton Literary Peace Prize awards a \$10,000 cash prize each year to one fiction and one nonfiction author whose work advances peace as a solution to conflict, and leads readers to a better understanding of other cultures, peoples, religions, and political points of view. Additionally, the Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award is bestowed upon a writer whose body of work reflects the Prize's mission; previous honorees include Wendell Berry, Taylor Branch, Geraldine Brooks, Louise Erdrich, John Irving, Barbara Kingsolver, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, Tim O'Brien, Marilynne Robinson, Gloria Steinem, Studs Terkel, Colm Tóibín, and Elie Wiesel. For more information visit the Dayton Literary Peace Prize media center at <http://daytonliterarypeaceprize.org/press.htm>.

###